

## **Food Safety During a Power Outage**

### **Food in Your Freezer**

- Don't open the door any more often than necessary. A full freezer will stay at safe temperatures about two days; a half-full freezer about one day.
- If your freezer is not full, group packages so they form an "igloo."
- If you think the power will be out for several days, try to find some dry ice for the freezer. Keep dry ice wrapped and do not touch it with your bare hands. Use cubed ice or block ice in the refrigerator.
- The foods in your freezer that partially or completely thaw before power is restored may be safely refrozen if they still contain ice crystals or are 40 °F or below.
- If foods in your freezer have not been above 40 degrees for more than two hours, items can be refrozen after cooking.
- If the time above 40 degrees is more than two hours or unknown, the thawed foods should be discarded.
- You will have to evaluate each item separately. *When in doubt, throw it out.*

### **Food in Your Refrigerator**

- In general, refrigerated items should be safe for up to four hours. Keep the door closed as much as possible.
- Discard any perishable foods (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and leftovers) that have been above 40 °F for two hours or more. Also discard any other food that has an unusual odor, color, or texture or feels warm to the touch.
- Keep an appliance thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer at all times.

*Adapted from resource material developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency*